

Advocates may already be doing more than you think to help resolve domestic violence cases successfully for the victim and for you as an investigator.

Laura Kinney, rural services director for the Women's Crisis Center said part of what advocates do is educate victims about the role of officers in a domestic violence investigation.

"We try to explain that the role of the officer is not to be a support system, but to provide information, investigate and see what action can be taken, if any."

The Women's Crisis Center serves 13 counties across northern Kentucky and is part of the Kentucky Domestic Violence Association, said Marsha Croxton, WCC's executive director. The center employs a number of programs ranging from its 24-hour crisis line to public education in schools about healthy relationships. More than 150 volunteers are on call daily to respond to victims who seek treatment at local hospitals.

Together in a variety of capacities, both the WCC and local law enforcement benefit from cross training, response teams and in-office advocates.

"We are professionals, so to have that professional respect and consideration going back and forth and knowing we are not always going to agree, that is more than fine," Kinney said. "On a particular case or situation we may see things differently, but we can still have a working relationship and try to see the strength in that."

Additionally, Kinney said advocates can help when reports of domestic violence don't rise to the level where an arrest is possible, but a victim still needs help.

"We hope they will look at those kind of things as a way of saying, maybe this is not something I can take action on as a police >>

► One of Kentucky's many domestic violence shelters, the Bluegrass Domestic Violence Program is centered around its 40-acre farm and gardens. Recently, many of the shelter's residents and volunteers worked together to plant new trees around the property. "BDVP believes that our farm program can provide avenues of healing (nutrition, physical activity and serenity) as well as opportunities for learning and sharing knowledge — a very powerful self confidence tool!" the website states.



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